FEW SOLDIERS AT CONCERT

Brilliant Playing by Miss Eda Kersey

It came as something of a shock to find only a dozen soldiers last night at the first concert to be given in Norwich under the Eastern Command Welfare Organisation's scheme for providing good class music for members of the Forces. Since there is no reason to suppose that the proportion of music lovers among the troops stationed in the neighbourhood of Norwich is smaller than in other parts of the region, where similar concerts have attracted much larger numbers, one can only conclude that for some reason or other the concert was not given sufficient publicity among the troops or that it was not announced in sufficient time to enable more men to be present. Whatever the reason it was extremely unfortunate that so few men in uniform were present to enjoy a programme of first-class fare, expressly arranged for their benefit and one hopes that when the next concert is arranged steps will be taken to ensure that last night's fiasco is not repeated. Fortunately the concert was open to members of the public who made a sufficient muster to provide a fair-size audience.

What it lacked in numbers the audience certainly made up for in enthusiasm and the artists must have felt their visit had been well worth while. Miss Eda Kersey, the violinist, gave an exhilarating performance, marked by great sensitiveness and resiliency. The singing tone of the A string of her Amati was thrilling in its beauty. With Miss Nina Milkina, Miss Kersey began the programme with Mozart's Sonata for Violin and Piano in B flat. Mozart is always a safe choice and in the hands of such brilliant soloists it was particularly acceptable. While the soloists were perfectly happy throughout, it was in the slow movement that their technique found its finest expression. Miss Kersey was also heard in Dvorak's Slavonic Dance in G minor and in a Presto by Tartini, both of which were full of life and action. The pianist, revealing a brilliant technique, played Chopin's A flat Waltz and delighted her hearers with her fingerng of the demi-semi-quavers of Rimsky-Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumble Bee."

The vocalist was Miss Janet Smith-Miller, a contralto, whose voice is outstanding for its exceptional purity and evenness and fine control. She began with "Softly awakes my heart," from "Samson and Delilah" (Saint-Saëns), and afterwards sang a group of modern songs which included Armstrong Gibbs' "Five Eyes," Stanford's "A Soft Day," and Bantock's "Feast of Lanterns."

R. S. L.

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